

Message Text

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11
ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 OC-06 CCO-00 SY-10 SS-20

NSC-10 EB-11 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 OMB-01 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4232
INFO JCS
DCA
CNO WASHDC
CSA WASHDC
CSAF WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
CINCUSAFE, RAMSTEIN AB GER
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG

S E C R E T TEHRAN 7450

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: MARR, ACOM, IR
SUBJECT: MEDITERRANEAN AERO STATION

REF: STATE 190374

SUMMARY: COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS ON PROPOSED STATION ARE PRESENTED.
END SUMMARY.

1. WE HAVE CAREFULLY CONSIDERED PROPOSAL FOR MEDITERRANEAN
AERO STATION OUTLINED REFTEL. DESPITE CABLE'S DETAILED INFO,
GEN. STONEY'S EXCELLENT BRIEFING AND OUR USEFUL DISCUSSIONS
WITH USAF COMMUNICATIONS EXPERTS BASED IN TEHRAN, WE STILL
HAVE DOUBTS AND QUESTIONS. PLEASE BEAR WITH US.

2. FIRST, WE ARE RELUCTANT TO ADD POSSIBLY 80-100 MILITARY
PERSONNEL WITH THEIR DEPENDENTS AND SOME 300 ACRES OF
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COMMO SITES TO AMERICAN PRESENCE IN TEHRAN. MISSION STAFFING

TOTAL IS NOW APPROACHING 1600 PERSONNEL PLUS DEPENDENTS; LARGE MAJORITY OF THESE MEN AND WOMEN ARE IN MILITARY PROGRAMS. ADDED TO THAT FIGURE ARE PRIVATE AMERICANS ENGAGED IN IRANIAN DEFENSE BUILDUP; THAT NUMBER WILL PROBABLY EXCEED 2000 PRINCIPALS WITHIN ONE YEAR. WHILE WE ENJOY EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH GOI, PARTICULARLY IN MILITARY MATTERS, AND EXPERIENCE NO HOSTILITY FROM IRANIANS IN GENERAL, WE ARE AWARE OF LATENT TENSIONS IN SOME QUARTERS OF POPULATION. STRAINS RESULTING FROM INFLATIONARY PRESSURES, INTELLECTUAL CRITICISM OF MILITARY EXPENDITURES, ABSENCE OF POLITICAL FREEDOM, AND RECENTLY, STRONG SYMPATHY FOR MOSLEM CAUSE IN MID-EAST FIGHTING HAVE NOT FUSED IN ANY FORM THAT COULD BE LABELED POPULAR DISCONTENT, BUT THEY REPRESENT TENDENCIES WHICH BEAR WATCHING. TO READ THESE SIGNS AS EQUAL TO FULLY DEVELOPED ANTI-AMERICANISM WOULD BE ERRONEOUS. WHERE THAT SENTIMENT EXISTS IT SEEMS ISOLATED AND INEFFECTIVE. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS WISE TO TAKE PROTECTIVE ACTION, AND WE DO NOT WISH TO ADD TO OUR PRESENCE HERE UNLESS IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY.

3. SECOND, WE ARE VIRTUALLY SURE SHAH WOULD ACCEPT ESTABLISHMENT OF STATION WITH ITS ASSOCIATED OFFER OF COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT. HOWEVER, WE ARE RELUCTANT TO MAKE PROPOSAL TO HIM UNTIL WE ARE ASSURED US CAN, IN FACT, ESTABLISH STATION. PARA 7 REFTTEL INDICATES FUNDING SUBJECT TO CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL. SHAH IS ALREADY SENSITIVE TO CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS US MILITARY PROGRAMS IN IRAN AND WE WOULD NOT WISH EMBROIL HIM IN LEGISLATIVE-EXECUTIVE QUARREL OVER FUNDING. THAT KIND OF DISPUTE COULD PROVE TO BE VERY EMBARRASSING TO US. FURTHER, WE WOULD NOT WISH DEVELOP IRANIAN COMMITMENT FOR CONSTRUCTION AND PARTICIPATION IN STATION AND TEHN HAVE IT FALL THROUGH FOR LACK OF FINANCING ON OUR SIDE.

4. FOR THESE REASONS, WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANSWERS TO FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

A. IS SERVICE PROPOSED FOR TEHRAN REALLY NECESSARY FOR MYSTIC STAR PROGRAM, OR, RATHER, IS IT SUPPORT OR BACKUP FOR OTHER STATIONS WHICH COULD CARRY OUT PROGRAM WITHOUT ADDITION OF TEHRAN?

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B. IS IT ESSENTIAL THAT STATION BE ESTABLISHED IN IRAN? WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW MAXIMUM GEORGRAPHICAL PERIMETERS FOR PROPOSED STATION'S LOCATION, COUNTRIES AND FACILITIES (DIEGO GARCIA) THAT WERE CONSIDERED, AND REASONS THEY WERE REJECTD IN FAVOR OR IRAN.

C. DO PROPOSED TASKS FOR STATION REPRESENT THE MINIMUM NECESSARY FOR ITS BASIC AND ESSENTIAL MISSION? COULD THAT MISSION BE PARED DOWN AND ACCOMPLISHED WITH FEWER MEN AND

SMALLER SITE?

D. HOW MUCH WILL IT COST USG TO ESTABLISH STATION AND WHAT IS ESTIMATED ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET FOR USG?

E. WHAT IS BEST ESTIMATE OF START-UP COSTS TO GOI (BASED ON US COMPARABLE COSTS) AND WHAT IS ANTICIPATED CHARGE TO IRAN BY USG FOR GOI'S USE OF FACILITY?

F. HOW WILL STATION PROPOSAL BE PRESENTED TO CONGRESS? SPECIFICALLY, WILL IT BE DESCRIBED AS NEW STATION OR TRANSFER OF KAGNEW OPERATION? WHAT WILL BE SAID OF IRANIAN PARTICIPATION? IN OPINION OF STATE AND DOD CONGRESSIONAL LIAISON OFFICES, HOW IS CONGRESS LIKELY TO REACT TO PROPOSAL?

5. WHEN WE HAVE THIS INFO IN HAND WE WILL BE BETTER PREPARED TO REACH A DEFINITE POSITION ON REFTTEL.
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